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Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D. C. 20505

ICS # 5489x

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22 July 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Lieutenant General Edward J. Heinz
Director, Intelligence Community Staff

FROM: Chief, Policy and Coordination Staff
Directorate of Operations

SUBJECT: Multilateral Counterterrorist Data System (MCDS)

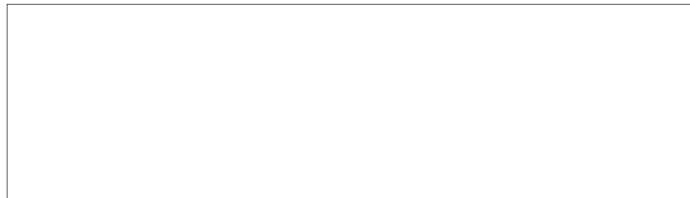
REFERENCES: A. Your Memorandum (ICS 4247-88), Same Subject, Dated
11 July 1988

B. DDCI Memorandum, Same Subject, Dated 24 June 1988

1. The Deputy Director for Operations has asked me to respond to your memorandum regarding the Multilateral Counterterrorist Data System (MCDS).

2. As you have noted in your memorandum and as the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence has noted in Reference B, a number of key issues associated with MCDS remain unresolved, particularly with respect to access and the extent of information to be input into the system. Although these issues have been discussed often, specific proposals for their resolution have not been forthcoming. If further discussions are to be productive, I believe it is necessary to have in hand concrete suggestions for dealing with these problems. Lacking such proposals, I believe the 28 July meeting should be postponed.

FOR THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS:



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Attachments: Refs



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Director
Intelligence Community Staff
Washington, D.C. 20505

ICS 4247-88
11 July 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Ambassador Morton I. Abramowitz
Asst Secy for Intelligence and Research
Department of State

Mr. Richard S. Stolz
Deputy Director for Operations
Central Intelligence Agency

Ambassador L. Paul Bremmer
Ambassador at Large for Counterterrorism
Department of State

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[REDACTED]
Deputy Director for Operations
National Security Agency

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[REDACTED]
Deputy Director for Foreign Intelligence (VP)
Defense Intelligence Agency

Mr. Andre LeGallo
National Intelligence Officer for Counterterrorism
National Intelligence Council

SUBJECT: Multilateral Counterterrorist Data System (MCDS)

1. The Intelligence Community Staff, in coordination with the Interagency Intelligence Committee on Terrorism and the CIA Counterterrorism Center, has been exploring the requirement and potential for improving automated information handling and data base support for agencies and commands with missions in counterterrorism. The DCI's Intelligence Information Handling Committee has circulated for Community comment a draft concept of design and operations which seeks to address the constraints inhibiting the utility of current intelligence support facilities. A closer exploration of the concept, to focus (inter alia) on operating requirements, security, and costs, has been proposed. [REDACTED]

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SUBJECT: Multilateral Counterterrorist Data System (MCDS)

2. A primary objective of the prospective program would be the expansion of counterterrorism information services to key organizations through more effective dissemination of current intelligence and the maintenance of a broader spectrum of reference and historical data bases which would be directly accessible by participating organizations. MCDS is envisioned as a Community undertaking, to which participating organizations would contribute, as appropriate. [redacted]

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3. In the latter regard, it is recognized that there are a number of issues and concerns which have inhibited the interchange of data within the counterterrorism community and restricted the utility of current information handling facilities, such as DESIST. Their implications, as concerns the potential for realizing envisioned information service improvements, need to be assessed at the outset, inasmuch as there would be little point in pursuing initiatives that would be inadequately supported and underutilized by the Community. [redacted]

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4. Toward this end, I would like to meet with you or appropriate policy-level representatives of your organizations to explore these questions, focusing on issues relating to the interchange of data, security safeguards, and the cost-benefit aspects of the prospective improvement initiatives. The meeting will be held on 28 July 1988 at 1030 [redacted]

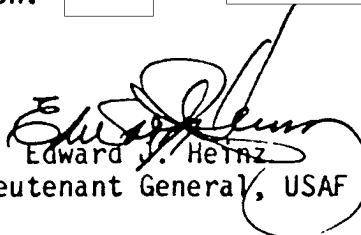
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Please advise [redacted]

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[redacted] of your anticipated representation. [redacted]

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Edward J. Heinz
Lieutenant General, USAF

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ER 2614-88

The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20505

24 June 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, DCI Intelligence Information
Handling Committee

SUBJECT: Multilateral Counterterrorist Data System
(MCDS)

1. I believe that it is premature to spend time and resources on MCDS until we resolve the fundamental issue of who will have access and what information will be provided. I believe the first step must be to reach agreement with the agencies that control the data, most particularly CIA and NSA, on exactly what data will be provided and the groundrules governing who will have access to it. ☐

2. I understand that data sharing has been a continuing problem with the existing DESIST system and has led to user complaints about the inadequacies of the system and the difficulty of using it. I suspect that neither NSA or CIA will be willing to make a substantially larger body of information available to the wide variety of agencies represented in the counterterrorism community. If that is the case, then I do not see how the present proposal is a significant advance beyond the DESIST system. ☐

☐
Robert M. Gates

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